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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/757,287	01/14/2004	Stephen Oser	35015US1	4506

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EXAMINER

CASTELLANO, STEPHEN J

ART UNIT PAPER NUMBER

3727

DATE MAILED: 07/19/2006

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

**Office Action Summary**

Application No.

10/757,287

Applicant(s)

OSER ET AL.

Examiner

Stephen J. Castellano

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3727

**-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --****Period for Reply**

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

**Status**

- 1) ☐ Responsive to communication(s) filed on \_\_\_\_.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**.                      2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

**Disposition of Claims**

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-11 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) \_\_\_\_ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-11 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

**Application Papers**

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 14 January 2004 is/are: a) ☒ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.  
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).  
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

**Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119**

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).  
a) ☐ All    b) ☐ Some \*    c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
  2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. \_\_\_\_.
  3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- \* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

**Attachment(s)**

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)                        | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)                     |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)               | Paper No(s)/Mail Date. ____.  |
| 3) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| Paper No(s)/Mail Date <u>1-14-04</u> .   | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: ____.                                    |

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Note that parts 105A and 105C are not identical but are similar and resemble mirror image parts.

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

Claims 1, 4, 5, 10 and 11 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Darby et al. ('411) (Darby).

Darby discloses an end closure assembly for a pressure vessel, comprising a head member (domed shaped element 39, tubular connector 55 and seal 57 made of elastomeric non-metallic material), a retainer ring (79 which can be made of fiber composite) and a securing plate (face plate 41). The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claims 1, 4, 5 and 9-11 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Darby.

Darby discloses the invention except for all of the parts of the head member being non-metal. Official notice is taken that domed heads and tubular connectors of non-metal composite plastic material are well known. It would have been obvious to use non metal plastic components where corrosion and weight are of concern.

Claims 2 and 3 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Darby in view of Galasso et al. (Galasso).

Galasso discloses the invention except for the elliptical head member. Galasso teaches an elliptical (insofar as elliptical is shown) head member (160) in contact with an universal head member (140) and a securing plate (110). It would have been obvious to add an elliptical head member to take up the space between an universal head member and a securing plate to provide a tight fit and to properly support the parts within the assembly so that these parts do not deform in the presence of excessive force or pressure.

Claims 6-8 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Darby in view of Andersson.


Darby discloses the invention except for the retainer ring comprising two elements. Andersson teaches a retainer ring 7, 8 comprised of support ring 8 and blocks 7, the block elements are believed to be identical. It would have been obvious to substitute the retaining ring structure of Andersson for Darby's expansion ring to compensate for thermal expansion of the ring assembly for application in hot or cold weather or for storing hot or cold fluid.

In the event that the blocks are not deemed identical, it would have been obvious to make the blocks identical and mirror images of each other as a matter of design choice in making similar uniform parts allowing easier manufacture and inventory and the ability to swap identical parts.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Stephen J. Castellano whose telephone number is 571-272-4535. The examiner can normally be reached on increased flexibility plan (IFP).

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Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

  
Stephen J. Castellano  
Primary Examiner  
Art Unit 3727

sjc